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about Canadian pulp,
paper, and wood

conserving biodiversity and wildlife habitat

As concern about their environmental footprint grows, consumers want to know they are making informed buying choices, and living in a way that puts less pressure on the Earth.

Canada's forest sector makes sure its wood, pulp and paper products are the result of responsible forest and production practices. Harvested areas are regenerated promptly, and Canada's tough forest regulations met. Companies welcome outside scrutiny of practices, participate in recovery and recycling, and promote carbon neutrality across the value chain. Buyers can be confident that today's quality products from Canada won't come at the expense of tomorrow's forests.

Looking for suppliers who commit to and deliver on these principles is an easy and effective way to choose responsible wood, pulp and paper products.

Canada's diverse forests

Canada's forests are rich in the biological diversity that organisms and ecosystems need to respond and adapt to environmental change. To maintain this biodiversity, Canada's forest sector uses a broad suite of approaches and tools to manage forests in a way that is ecologically sustainable and benefits local communities and society in general.

Maintaining biodiversity is an important forest management objective, and Canada's National Forest Strategy has identified the conservation of forest biological diversity as a priority, with indicators such as the area of forest, by type and age class, in each ecozone, and population levels of selected forest-associated species.



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forest management and biodiversity

Canada's forest products industry works with other landowners and partners in government and the conservation community to manage forests sustainably, balancing social, economic, and environmental values. Researchers and forest managers study how landscapes and ecosystems work, and adapt planning and practices to local conditions.

In addition to establishing protected areas, Canada's forest sector actively supports the development of best management practices for sustainable forest management, and regularly incorporates this knowledge into forest policies and forest management plans.

Canada's boreal diversity

Canada's boreal forests contain critical habitat for a number of species, including species at risk. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement – signed in May 2010 by 21 forest companies and nine leading environmental organizations – aims to conserve significant areas of Canada's boreal region, protect threatened woodland caribou, and provide a competitive market edge for participating companies.

Once fully implemented, the agreement will lead to the highest environmental standards of forest management in 72 million hectares (178 million acres) of Canada's public boreal forest. It will make Canada a world leader in conservation and protection of boreal biodiversity through a mix of conservation measures, the completion of a protected areas network and implementation of world-leading forest practices.

migratory birds

Canada's boreal forest and its wetlands provide important breeding and nesting habitat for nearly half of Canada's bird species. As many as six billion breeding or migratory birds representing more than 200 species pass through Canada's boreal region annually.

The country's forest products industry ensures managed forests provide a variety of bird habitat conditions along migration routes and in over-wintering areas. Actions include maintaining adequate coarse woody debris – such as logs, stumps and large branches cut and left in the forest or trees that have died but remain standing – and leaving buffers along lakes, streams and other waterways. It also supports bird research, inventory and monitoring.



Bird populations in Canada's boreal region are protected under federal legislation including the Migratory Birds Convention Act and the Species at Risk Act. The Canadian Wildlife Service is preparing bird conservation plans for all Canadian eco-regions that will identify the status of bird species, the conservation issues, and the recommended actions to address them.

research leads to better decisions

A recent study by the Canadian Forest Service says the overall long-term population trends of most boreal bird species are either stable or increasing. Populations of some common bird species are in decline around the world, and they include some found in Canada's boreal forest such as the rusty blackbird or Canada warbler. While the reasons for the declines are mostly unknown, it is most likely related to various environmental changes and habitat loss or degradation that could be occurring on the breeding grounds, wintering grounds, or in migration stopover habitats. Some countries where birds that breed in Canada over-winter have lost significant amounts of original forest cover.

Forest harvesting may cause changes in forest bird composition, diversity and abundance that are positive, negative or neutral, depending on the species and its habitat. Research suggests populations of common species of boreal birds appear to be compatible with habitat management practices that attempt to mimic natural disturbances, including a moderate amount of clearcutting. Most jurisdictions in Canada have developed or are in the process of developing harvesting policies that aim to mimic natural disturbances, and are implementing ecosystem management practices to conserve wildlife habitat.



Habitats near open water are often rich in biodiversity. Buffers alongside waterways are a legal obligation in all of Canada's provinces and territories, and forest managers make sure they understand riparian ecology and the impact of different forest management strategies.

Research is being conducted on many issues affecting boreal birds. For example, researchers are measuring impacts of natural and human disturbances on bird communities, populations and individuals from local to landscape levels. They are also monitoring changes in regional populations and determining habitat types and features critical to indicator species.

species at risk

Canada's forests are home to about two-thirds of the country's estimated 140,000 species of plants, animals and micro-organisms – including some threatened species. Maintaining healthy populations of forest-associated species at risk is an important objective of forest management plans in Canada.

In 2002, Canada adopted the Species at Risk Act, based on a national list prepared by the independent Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Conservation actions range from monitoring the size or breeding success of the population to providing habitat for a variety of uses such as finding food, avoiding predators and reproducing.

woodland caribou

Most of Canada's two million caribou are found in the open tundra and taiga of the country's north. About 180,000 woodland caribou are widely dispersed in small herds in Canada's boreal and mountain forests. Woodland caribou populations face many risks, including pressure from predators such as wolves and bears; habitat loss or fragmentation from fires or industrial development, utility or seismic lines and roads; or a combination of factors.

Caribou recovery plans being developed across Canada identify critical habitat and support decisions related to land use planning, road access and long-term habitat management. Local communities, First Nations and resource industries are actively involved in the implementation of these recovery actions, and forest management plans address the need to ensure there are enough forests for habitat both today and into the future.

Canada's forest companies have implemented operational practices and guidelines to help manage and recover caribou where they exist. The Canada Boreal Forest Agreement will lead to action plans for caribou based on leading, independent science that will be used to provide input into relevant government processes.



Canada has many older forests, which provide specialized habitats that play a significant role in maintaining biological diversity. While these old-growth forests are not static, Canada requires that representative areas are maintained to meet biodiversity needs and to provide the resiliency needed to help forests adapt to climate change.



protected areas

About eight per cent of Canada's forest is protected, and more is currently considered inaccessible for harvesting. Protected areas safeguard biodiversity, allow scientific research, support environmental monitoring, and maintain environmental stability in surrounding regions. They also provide opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking, camping and nature viewing.

world leader in certification

Canada is a world leader in voluntary third-party forest certification. The standards of the three certification programs used in Canada – the Canadian Standards Association, the Forest Stewardship Council, and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative – all have requirements to conserve biodiversity and its associated values.

summary

With 10 per cent of the world's total forest cover, Canada manages its diverse lands and produces quality forest products in a way that meets the highest environmental standards.

Choosing wood products from Canada means using an environmentally sustainable product that is better for the environment than steel, plastic or concrete. Choosing pulp and paper from Canada means using products from one of the most environmentally responsible sources in the world. Canada's forest products industry is poised to continue to contribute significantly to the greening of society.

To learn more,
visit feel-good.ca.

resources

British Columbia Integrated Land Management Bureau

Central and North Coast Ecosystem-based Management Implementation
www.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/central_north_coast/index.html

Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement

www.canadianborealforestagreement.com

Canadian Council of Forest Ministers

Canadian Criteria and Indicators Framework

www.ccfm.org/english/coreproducts-criteria_in.asp

Coast Forest Conservation Initiative (Great Bear Rainforest)

www.coastforestconservationinitiative.com

Environment Canada Species at Risk

www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default_e.cfm

Forest Products Association of Canada:

Woodland Caribou Recovery

www.fpac.ca/publications/FPA-14505_Caribou_Recovery_EN_HR%5B1%5D.pdf

Woodland Caribou and Sustainable Forest Management

www.fpac.ca/publications/woodland_caribou_en.pdf

Natural Resources Canada:

Canada's Forests - Biodiversity

<http://canadaforests.nrcan.gc.ca/article/biodiversity>

Sustainable Forest Management in Canada

<http://www.sfmcanada.org/>

Does Harvesting in Canada's boreal forest affect bird populations?

http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/nrcan/Fo93-1-5-2010-eng.pdf



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